



NEWS RELEASE

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LINDA FITCH NAMED 2005 NEBRASKA SITE MANAGER OF THE YEAR

O'Neill, Neb. May 18, 2006 – United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Nebraska State Director Scot Blehm presented Linda Fitch with an award today for being selected as the 2005 Nebraska Site Manager of the Year for Housing for the Elderly. Fitch, executive director for North Park Homes in O'Neill for over 25 years, received the award for her excellence in management, commitment to service, apartment maintenance and her diligence in building caring relationships with her tenants.

"Site Manager of the Year awards are a means for USDA Rural Development to recognize and reward managers who show dedication and commitment not only to the management of the complexes but more importantly to the tenants who occupy them," said Blehm. "Managers, like Linda Fitch assist us in accomplishing our mission of providing safe and affordable housing to rural Nebraskans."

During her time as manager, North Park Homes experienced very few vacancies. Fitch's dedication to the tenants and the complex are visible by visiting the complex and by looking in the eyes of its' tenants and hearing their comments when speaking of their friend. Fitch is well known in the rural community of approximately 3,700 for her quality managerial role. She has a high expertise in financial management reflected in the complex's financial records.

"Linda takes the time to really know her tenants. She's familiar with their families, birthdays, hobbies and interests and also lends an ear to their hurts and needs," said Dixie Lederer, multi family housing specialist for USDA Rural Development. "Linda is all one would want in a manager if you were to relocate a family member from their home of many years to apartment living."

USDA Rural Development accepted nominations from its field staff for managers of USDA Rural Development rural rental housing complexes. Nominations were based on tenant satisfaction, property curbside appeal, accurate and complete record keeping and consistent performance of actions above and beyond the call of duty. The O'Neill Housing Authority Board joined USDA Rural Development in the nomination of Fitch.

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